

**Common Course Outline**  
**PAST 235**  
**Professional Issues**  
**3 Credits**

**The Community College of Baltimore County**

**Description**

This course covers professional issues that are key to the role and functioning of physician assistants. Medical ethics for physician assistants is the major focus of the course. Other topics include history of the PA Profession, PA Certification and regulation, quality assurance and risk management.

**Overall Course Objectives**

At the conclusion of the course the student will be able to:

- A. Outline the history and development of the PA Profession;
- B. Explain the scope of PA practice in Maryland;
- C. Draw comparisons between PA practice in Maryland and other states and explain the reasons for the differences and the impact of health care delivery;
- D. Apply methods of ethical decision making to actual case studies;
- E. List the qualifications for national PA certification; and
- F. Identify, explain, and apply in writing methods of quality assurance and risk management.

**Major Topics**

- A. History and Development of the PA Profession
  1. Development of the concept
  2. First PA Program
  3. Changes in PA Education
  4. Evolution of the PA Role
- B. National Certification
  1. Eligibility
  2. Taking the Exam
  3. NCCPA
  4. Maintaining certification
- C. Maryland Certification
  1. Regulations
  2. Applications process
  3. Dependent Role
  4. Prescribing
  5. In-patient vs. out-patient practice
- D. Medical ethics
  1. Historical Context
    - a. Nuremberg Code
    - b. National Research Act
    - c. Medical Discovery and Technology
    - d. The President's Commission
  2. Core Concepts in Medical Ethics
    - a. Ethical Theories

- (1) consequentialism (teleology/utilitarianism)
- (2) deontology
- b. Basic Principles and Values
  - (1) Respect
  - (2) Beneficence
  - (3) Nonmalficence
  - (4) Justice
  - (5) Ethical Dilemmas
- c. Ethical Decision Making
- 3. PA as Professional Moral Agent
  - a. Technical Skills and Competence
  - b. Personal attitudes and virtues
- 4. PA-Patient Communication
  - a. Informed consent
  - b. Confidentiality
  - c. Patient Compliance
- 5. End-of-Life Choices
- 6. Professional and Institutional Relationships
  - a. conflict
  - b. business concerns

### **Course Requirements**

Methods of Evaluation:

- A. Written examination
- B. Brief presentations
- C. Brief papers

### **Other Course Information**

Methods of Instruction:

- A. Lecture
- B. Small group discussion